

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

3 SENATE BILL 27

By: Pemberton

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5
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to the Oklahoma Higher Learning
8 Access Program; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2603,
9 which relates to eligibility; modifying eligibility
10 to include certain SAT score; providing eligibility
11 for students who complete certain core curriculum;
12 updating statutory language; providing an effective
13 date; and declaring an emergency.

14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

15 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 2603, is
16 amended to read as follows:

17 Section 2603. A. Except as otherwise provided for in
18 subsection B of this section and elsewhere in this section, to be
19 eligible to participate in the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access
20 Program and to qualify for an award which includes payment of an
21 amount equivalent to resident tuition or other tuition pursuant to
22 Section 2604 of this title for the first semester or other academic
23 unit of postsecondary enrollment, a student shall:

24 1. Be a resident of this state or be enrolled in a school
district located in this state that serves students who reside in

1 both this state and an adjacent state pursuant to a contract as
2 authorized in Section 5-117.1 of this title;

3 2. Be a United States citizen or lawfully present in the United
4 States. A student who is not a United States citizen or lawfully
5 present in the United States shall not be eligible to participate in
6 the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program and to qualify for an
7 award notwithstanding the provisions of Section 3242 of this title.
8 The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to any student who
9 was enrolled in the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program prior to
10 the end of the 2006-2007 school year;

11 3. Have a record of satisfactory compliance with agreements
12 executed pursuant to Section 2605 of this title;

13 4. a. have graduated within the previous three (3) years
14 from a high school accredited by the State Board of
15 Education, or the Oklahoma School of Science and
16 Mathematics with a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point
17 average on a 4.0 scale for all work attempted in
18 grades nine through twelve,

19 b. have graduated within the previous three (3) years
20 from a high school not accredited by the State Board
21 of Education with a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point
22 average on a 4.0 scale for all work attempted in
23 grades nine through twelve and have achieved a
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1 composite score of 22 or higher on the ACT test or a
2 composite score of 1110 or higher on the SAT, or
3 c. have satisfactorily completed within the previous
4 three (3) years an educational program that was
5 provided through a means other than a public or
6 private school and have achieved a composite score of
7 22 or higher on the ACT test or a composite score of
8 1110 or higher on the SAT;

9 5. Have completed the curricular requirements for admission to
10 an institution within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education
11 and one additional unit or set of competencies in a course that
12 meets college admission requirements; or have completed the core
13 curriculum and is seeking admission to a technology center school
14 overseen by the State Board of Career and Technology Education. The
15 curriculum requirements for admission to an institution within The
16 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education shall include two units or
17 sets of competencies in foreign or non-English language or
18 technology courses that meet the college admission requirements and
19 one unit or set of competencies of a fine arts course. Students
20 shall also have attained a 2.5 grade point average in the core
21 curriculum courses. Students who attended a high school which did
22 not offer all the core curriculum courses or students who were
23 educated by other means and were not offered all the core curriculum
24 courses shall be allowed to satisfy this curriculum requirement by

1 participating in a program approved by the Oklahoma State Regents
2 for Higher Education for remediation of high school curricular
3 deficiencies;

4 6. Have satisfied admission standards as determined by the
5 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education for first-time-entering
6 students for the appropriate type of institution, or, if attending a
7 private institution, have satisfied admission standards as
8 determined by the private institution. No student participating in
9 the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program shall be admitted into
10 an institution of higher education by special admission standards;

11 7. Have secured admission to, and enrolled in, an institution
12 which is a member of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education,
13 a postsecondary vocational-technical program offered by a technology
14 center school that meets the requirements to be eligible for federal
15 student financial aid, or a private institution of higher learning
16 located within this state and accredited pursuant to Section 4103 of
17 this title; and

- 18 8. a. have established financial need according to the
19 provisions of subsection D of Section 2605 of this
20 title and standards and provisions promulgated by the
21 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education,
- 22 b. if the student was adopted between birth and twelve
23 (12) years of age while in the permanent custody of
24 the Department of Human Services, in the court-ordered

1 custody of a licensed private nonprofit child-placing
2 agency, or federally recognized Indian tribe, as
3 defined by the federal Indian Child Welfare Act, have
4 established financial need according to the provisions
5 of paragraph 1 of subsection E of Section 2605 of this
6 title and standards and provisions promulgated by the
7 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, or

8 c. if the student was adopted between thirteen (13) and
9 seventeen (17) years of age while in the permanent
10 custody of the Department of Human Services, in the
11 court-ordered custody of a licensed private nonprofit
12 child-placing agency, or federally recognized Indian
13 tribe, as defined by the federal Indian Child Welfare
14 Act, have established financial need according to the
15 provisions of paragraph 2 of subsection E of Section
16 2605 of this title and standards and provisions
17 promulgated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
18 Education.

19 B. 1. A student shall be eligible to participate in the
20 Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program and to qualify for an award
21 which includes payment of an amount equivalent to resident tuition
22 or other tuition pursuant to Section 2604 of this title for the
23 first semester or other academic unit of postsecondary enrollment if
24 the student meets all of the following criteria:

- 1 a. is a child of any person killed after January 1, 2000,
2 in the line of duty in any branch of the United States
3 Armed Forces or who died after January 1, 2000, as a
4 result of an injury sustained while in the line of
5 duty in any branch of the United States Armed Forces
6 and the person who was killed or died filed an
7 individual or joint Oklahoma income tax return for the
8 tax year prior to the year during which the person was
9 killed or died,
- 10 b. is a resident of this state or is enrolled in a school
11 district located in this state that serves students
12 who reside in both this state and an adjacent state
13 pursuant to a contract as authorized in Section 5-
14 117.1 of this title,
- 15 c. enrolls in an institution within The Oklahoma State
16 System of Higher Education prior to reaching the age
17 of twenty-one (21),
- 18 d. has satisfied admission standards as determined by the
19 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education for first-
20 time-entering students for the appropriate type of
21 institution, or, if attending a private institution,
22 has satisfied admission standards as determined by the
23 private institution. No student participating in the
24 Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program shall be

1 admitted into an institution of higher education by
2 special admission standards,

3 e. has secured admission to, and enrolled in, an
4 institution which is a member of The Oklahoma State
5 System of Higher Education, a postsecondary
6 vocational-technical program offered by a technology
7 center school that meets the requirements to be
8 eligible for federal student financial aid, or a
9 private institution of higher learning located within
10 this state and accredited pursuant to Section 4103 of
11 this title, and

12 f. executes an agreement pursuant to subsection C of
13 Section 2605 of this title.

14 2. A student who is eligible to participate in the program
15 pursuant to this subsection shall not be required to meet the
16 eligibility requirements set forth in subsection A of this section.

17 C. To retain eligibility while pursuing the program of higher
18 learning in which enrolled, the student shall:

19 1. Meet the requirements for retention and degree completion as
20 established by the institution in which the student is enrolled;

21 2. Maintain good academic standing and satisfactory academic
22 progress according to standards of the Oklahoma State Regents for
23 Higher Education;

1 3. Maintain satisfactory academic progress as required for
2 eligibility for federal Title IV student financial aid programs.
3 The provisions of this paragraph shall become effective for the
4 2012-2013 school year;

5 4. Comply with the standards related to maintenance of
6 eligibility as promulgated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
7 Education; and

8 5. Refrain from conduct that leads to expulsion or suspension
9 of more than one semester from an institution of higher education.
10 A student who violates the provisions of this paragraph shall
11 permanently lose eligibility for program benefits. The provisions
12 of this paragraph shall become effective January 1, 2008.

13 D. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the
14 State Board of Career and Technology Education shall promulgate
15 rules relating to maintenance of eligibility under the Oklahoma
16 Higher Learning Access Act by a student.

17 E. It is the intent of the Legislature that students in the
18 ninth grade for the 1992-93 school year who are determined to be
19 eligible Oklahoma Higher Learning Access students pursuant to the
20 Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Act shall be the first students
21 eligible for benefits from the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Trust
22 Fund.

23 F. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education are
24 authorized to study, develop, and propose criteria for determining

1 award eligibility based upon the completion of seven semesters of
2 high school coursework by a student.

3 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2023.

4 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
5 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby
6 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
7 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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